

July 8, 1990

Dear Harold:

This is attempt to respond to your long letter of June 29th. Nothing here is meant to offend you. I know that you are very unwell, and I apologize for pursuing this, but in light of some of your charges against me, I feel that I must go on trying to reason with you. I did not know the circumstances under which you wrote and printed PM etc, but it sounds like what I lived with for nearly all of my life as a writer. It was a nightmare.

I hope that you will comply with my wish to send some Xerox copies of the documentation of certain facts which you mention which I need to know, such as the MDW material on the ambulances and so on. If there is any cost for your time and copying, I will be glad to pay it. I have got to have the facts straight, and you know that.

This is not an accusation, but in 1979 the A.P. heard about my position that the X-rays and photos were forged and asked me who they could talk to about it. I mentioned you, and we went to see you. The story that was published used you to discredit what I had to say within the same story, and a series of serious troubles befell me for years afterwards. I was unable to get out my material. I had been having troubles before that, granted, but I was just about wiped off the face of the earth. Again. So part of the exercise I have been going through with you is to reach some sort of common ground and mutual respect, because I don't want people whom I respect used against me like that again, if I can reason with them. Its becoming clear that I cannot reason with you on certain issues.

So please do not be offended by this observation, but you are guilty of very many of the things you accuse me of. I will try to detail just a few points, but please understand that whatever happens, I have the greatest respect for you and what you have been through, and what you have accomplished. Unfortunately, your work remains largely inaccessible for people with my kind of mind. And I'm not stupid. I am a scholar and a writer of some accomplishment, I'm told. Writers are not always too clear on how they appear or read to others.

You know that your early writing on the case was under appalling conditions. You simply cannot expect just anyone (even of high intelligence) to be able to sort through it. Your letters reflect the same confusion and distortions which are in your writing.

And do not be offended by that. Our minds play tricks on

us. I need facts right now, and I would hope that you could take the time to be sure that I have the documentation of so many things you talk about, but never put in front of me. I cannot sort through PM to find these points, try as I might. I just paid someone highly recommended at Harvard to do it (that's why I needed another copy), and she could not. She has five degrees or so, and speaks as many languages. PM is a monumental work and your achievement is great, but it is inaccessible to me to a certain extent. Be advised that I have read nearly all (if not all) of it at one time or another. And, I'm sure that there are grade school kids smarter than me who can understand it. I'm sure that there is a lot in this life that I can understand and that almost no-one knows. Some people think that I'm on the frontier of knowledge in certain areas. There are also visual people and math people that often cannot read. Artistic people often have not a hope of getting through algebra.

I tried all of these years to spare you my saying that I had difficulty with your work. I knew you would make a fool of me, finding your chance. We all are sources of ridicule to some people. You are no exception, and I have been one of your defenders in spite of what you did to me (though perhaps not deliberately) in 1979. I forgave.

I still see the same problem. You have in front of you an X-ray of the head, and photographs of the head. Have you been to a doctor to ask them about that? An idiot can see that there is a problem with them. There are many other problems with the photos and X-rays but the kind of argument you use to repeatedly deny that this is so is the same as an ostrich putting its head into a hole in the ground. This is what I was trying to point out in 1979, and look what happened to me.

Your letter mentions that you took quotes, or mention statements made by Perry, McClelland and Carrico (I take it published in PM). My point is that you gather evidence other than "official" evidence and it evidently figures into your findings and conclusions. At the very least, you present it. So, henceforth, do not try to limit me to the "official" evidence. In addition, you know very well that there can be all sorts of problems with that alleged evidence, so don't quote it to me as though it was the Holy Grail.

You have one position that is and remains preposterous: That you see no need for faking the pictures and X-rays. Granted that you don't see it, but can't you see that 1) the X-rays of the head show the right front of the face gone, (which the photos do not show) and 2) that the picture of the back of the head are completely incompatible with the official medical testimony on what it looked like.

What you can't see is the "matte line" which is brought out by successive generations made from each print. That takes a little more access to this material than perhaps you've had. What is preposterous is your idea that they would not have faked material if they could be found out. Evidence is faked every day by conspirators. Obviously they rarely plan on being found out. In this case they fouled up (with regard to the photos and X-rays) and Robert and I were the first ones to see it (I believe).

I don't have factual or literary problems with PM. It is poorly organized and so larded with invective, rhetoric, asides, and personal vituperation that it completely gets in the way of trying to sort through the evidence. (Bare in mind that many people have told me this) As I said, I'm sure many other people can read it just fine. I have a problem with it, and obviously I am one of the most important people you had to teach. I'm mad at you because of the fact that I can't sort through it. I don't need vituperation from you right now because you fielded a new generation of fighters to take up the cudgel, and you have got to get through the facts somehow, to us, not your own hard feelings. Your letters and discussions are so convoluted as to strike out for me trying to find out just what you do mean. I don't give a goddamn about Occum. I want the facts so that I can understand them.

Now, Harold, don't get mad, but your letter once again distorts much of what I said, though I need to find my letter to you and double check it, but I know I did not say (as your letter says I said) that the ambulance came at 4 PM. You make so many errors in a sentence. I said the plane landed at 6 PM and the autopsy started at eight. If the ambulance took forty-five minutes to get to Bethesda, it did not take an hour and fifteen minutes to take the X-rays and get set up. This time never seemed to be accounted for. Could you account for it rather than just say you said it all somewhere in your voluminous pile of writing that "stacks up?" Did you (or anyone) account for that time?

You quote me at the beginning of that paragraph as saying that I said the body arrived at Bethesda at 6. I never said that. I said the plane landed at 6. See, a lot of our problem is semantic, perhaps. I am just trying to point out to you that perhaps because of your operation or whatever, your mind plays more tricks on you than mine does on me (and it can play a lot these days). This is why I am so afraid of you after what you did to me in 1979. (do you want to see that article?)

I again state that I appreciate your cautions about O'Connor. I have had trouble all along with him in this regard,

but I nevertheless interview him like everyone else to see what else he has to say. I don't think he made all of that up about the body bag and the shipping casket. I did not--as you say--"you have only belated questions about him, after my comments." Harold, I published a long article in The Third Decade years ago picking apart Lifton's book, which earned me Lifton's undying hatred, and probably serious trouble now brought by him. He has made a lot of trouble for me, as Robert will tell you, and hurt me greatly a few months ago. Robert said yesterday that Lifton has a major slander campaign underway right now. He set my work back ten years ago, and it took that long to recover from his deliberate distortion of what I was researching and trying to do.

Now, lets get something straight. I never believed for many years a word of Lifton's story. I took the position (and published in articles) that his witnesses were young and impressionable and might have made mistakes under the stress of the moment. Under great pressure a couple years ago, I felt that their testimony on television several times was credible. I gave guarded mention of my doubts as to my original denunciation of the body theft/alteration theory in the Afterword of my book. I made it clear in the head wounds chapter that I did not feel that the body could have been stolen on the plane, after talking to Dave Powers about this.

But, I don't think that you can prove that the body was at all times attended at Parkland during the battle. I don't say that it was stolen then. I just say that it might have been possible because we don't know how guarded it was. You may think you know that it was perfectly guarded, but I believe that someone in the President's guard betrayed him in the plot, and that someone might have been in a position (with an accomplice) to steal the body at some time. I do not postulate that it in fact happened.

You once again distort what I wrote. You say "Your proof that JFK's body was stolen at Parkland is: "It could have happened. We don't know that it did not." Harold, what kind of slime do you think I am that you can time after time dump on me like this? I have never remotely said that the body was in fact stolen, or offered as proof the above. I merely speculate that since we can't prove that it didn't happen and since there is a bit of circumstantial evidence that it did happen, it might possibly have happened. But not probable. You say that I say "Because we don't know that it didn't happen, it did happen." Never would I say such a thing, and if you persist in this sort of attack on me and my study of this case, then you only make a fool out of yourself.

You ask "how did anyone know there were bullets in the neck?" They damn sure in Dallas knew he had been shot in the throat from in front, so there would be a reasonable supposition that there might be a bullet in the neck somewhere.

That leaves me with the throat wound tear. So far, several policemen have found that the photograph appears to have airbrushing over some of the large gash in the throat. Why? I don't know. First of all, in Dallas, the doctors told me they picked up the back of the head and carefully examined it after he died. No-one noted any wound in the back of the neck, though I don't know if they looked there. If there had been an exit wound they might have noticed it. The average bullet does not leave the body after entrance. It stands to reason that a bullet entering the front of the neck as the doctors in Dallas said, might have lodged in the spinal column and the plotters would want to retrieve that.

Perry insisted to us that he did not make such a large tear as we now have, and the other doctors confirm this. So how do you explain it?

Please do not twist and distort my legitimate speculations into statement of fact which I did not make. One might speculate that the tear was made to get the bullet out before the autopsy, and therefore it is possible that either someone had access to the body to do this, or it was stolen. Simply because we think it was always guarded (which we cannot prove), that does not make it impossible if 1) we are wrong and for moments it was unguarded, and 2) some of the guards were part of the plot. You may think you can prove the body was always guarded, but you can't.

In Brazil and other Latin (and Iberian countries) it is customary for courts and the judiciary to document every little thing. For this reason, extensive testimony of victims of the torture to which large numbers of people were subjected to were preserved. Evidence was fabricated to frame the victims. In such countries this is the M.O. I'm saying that the Latin section of the Agency who provided us this heinous murder followed the same pattern. they fabricated evidence because they were used to doing it. I imagine plotters often fear being found out, but they do the best they can to fake it, in case it can help them defend themselves at a later date.

No, the plotters here did not quite control everything, but it looks like they just about have controlled officialdom. It is so obvious what all of this evidence says, and yet government here spits in the eye of it, just as the Governor just did to me in a letter this week about the case.

The plotters had a lot to worry about even though the real hitmen got away. A counter power center could have developed and resisted or overthrown them had the truth got out. As long as they could control the evidence and keep the lid on and control public opinion by providing a scape goat, no ground swell of public opinion could counteract the plot. At the same time, they systematically spread terror. The country was already paralyzed. Your statement that leaving evidence implicating Oswald accomplished nothing at all other than to give them lead time is ridiculous. You say that framing Oswald was nothing more than "icing on the cake". Harold, that got them off the hook pretty much forever. All the country needed was a scapegoat. That's what we are trained to accept.

It was Gus Hall.

All of your convolutions about the fragments are a grand obfuscation. We are totally agreed, but you continue to twist all that I have said. Could you copy the FBI reports for me or point me to them in your book with the exact weights of the fragments that we do know were taken from Connally's body?

As for citing fragments that were allegedly washed away as proof that they could not have come from CE 399, this is very bad thinking, sir. It is not evidence at all, and you know that very well. We have no idea scientifically what the weight was of what was allegedly washed away.

As you recall, I sent you my medical chapters and I changed the galleys with every single change (at some considerable expense) which you requested, giving you all of the credit you claimed without question. I would still do so.

Harold, I have often come to your house at some considerable trouble, hoping to learn something. We all comment on the fact that it is hard to get you to talk about the case and some of the time you waste with other matters is very disturbing to your guests who sit at your feet. You thought so little of me that you did not take me by the scruff of the neck, drag me down to your dungeon and thrust in front of me everything I need to know. You didn't do it because you are territorial, and you didn't want me to know. You didn't do it because you underrated me. You didn't care enough.

I said that either Spector and Ford were deliberately a part of the plot or coverup with their magic bullet theory (you asked me what they invented? It was the Magic Bullet Theory), or they were fools. Fools because if they didn't use this theory to deliberately cover up and came up with it out of their own dimwits, they are fools because it isn't a rational theory. I'll

stand on that statement. Please do not play games with me.

It is well known (and found by the HSCA) that Helms controlled what the WC got to see from CIA, and that he in fact did not give them anything they didn't ask for. I think its clear that he deliberately obfuscated the investigation. I also feel that he had guilty knowledge.

I don't think that I have theorized as to who (meaning a specific person or persons) did it, as you accuse me on page 5. I have described (as have many others) what I think the outlines of the plot and where it came from were.

I would like to see what you have on Marchetti because I detected his vacillations also. This is very important and I would like to get this from you.

Once again you distort something. You say that O'Connor disagrees with anything Lifton published as coming from him-taped? I said (nor did he) nothing of the kind. He just can't accept much of what Lifton says in his theory.

I would appreciate having documentation that Garrison had obtained by Federal Court order access to the autopsy photographs and X-rays, and in addition, that he chickened out in obtaining this material and if so, what were the circumstances. I never heard this story.

Prove that RFK at any time had actual or constructive access to any of the autopsy materials.

The national security service of France does not make up things. In addition, Thomas Buchanan's book is very accurate, but he did not have the minutiae of evidence we have. He had the Big Picture.

As for Ray, back up the statements you make. How did you exculpate him? He is in jail. How could Ray possibly have been acquitted against the evidence presented against him? Ray never could have proved his innocence. Oswald could.

You again twist something. I asked you about that Post story. I did not say that I know have a bullet as a result. The story said the FBI confirmed to them that a bullet had been found in the shoulder. This is the Post?

On the basis of your final comments in your letter, it is clear that you never have paid to much attention to me or what I say. I have not always been clear on some points and so approached you to get a clearer picture. Instead what I get are

very many distortions of what I do maintain, along with serious vituperation as a result of leveling with you on two points: That your books (for whatever reason) are greatly difficult for a lot of us to understand, and your arrogance at times which clouds your vision to such an extent that you helped set this research back ten years in 1979 when an article was published nationally by the AP quoting you ridiculing me. And I had been kind enough to bring the AP to your house that day.

You are still going to set it back, I fear. In any event, Harold, I hope that this does not cause some sort of a break. I believe in getting our true feelings out into the open and you have now let me know what you really feel about me. That does not interfere with my affection and respect for you. I would hope that this exercise gets a little more of the same from you. We are entitled to disagree, and hopefully such disagreements will help clarify even more of the evidence and the case one way or another.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Harry', written in dark ink.

Harrison E. Livingstone